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ABSTRACT

Both the Holmes Group report and the Carnegie Commission report have substantiated a need for restructuring teacher training within several similar parameters. Many of the suggestions from the two reports are similar to established practices for restructuring teacher education that were developed and implemented by National Teacher Corps, originating more than 20 years ago. The majority of Teacher Corps Programs were graduate degrees in fields other than education and trained in pedagogy with emphasis on immediate application in classrooms. Differentiated staffing was a consideration in Teacher Corps Programs. This paper points out that re-examining the thrusts of the the Teacher Corps and the Holmes and Carnegie reports leads to the conclusion that some reforms may result in finding answers from previously tried experimental programs. (Author/JD)

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Holmes Groups and Carnegie Reports:

Teacher Corps Rediscovered?

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Abstract

Several national reports on the status of American education have been completed in the past five years. Focus upon the training of teachers has been included in recent reports. The Holmes Group report("Tomorrow's Teachers") and the Carnegie Commission report("A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century") have recently received attention in light of teacher education reform. Both reports have substantiated a need for restructuring teacher training within several similar parameters. Many of the suggestions from the two reports are similar to established practices for restructuring teacher education that were developed and implemented by National Teacher Corps, originating more than 20 years ago.

The call for teacher education reform may result in finding answers from previously tried experimental programs. A need to re-examine the effects of Teacher Corps programs upon teacher training becomes obvious when comparing the thrusts of the Holmes and Carnegie reports.

Holmes Group and Carnegie Reports: Teacher Corps Rediscovered?

Current discussion centering upon teacher education reform in the United States rests primarily on two recently completed reports. The Holmes Group(1986) report entitled "Tomorrow's Teachers" and the Carnegie Forum(1986) report, "A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century", are stikingly similar in purpose and content as pointed out by Keppel(1986). Both reports indicate a need for restructuring teacher education which have implications for preservice and inservice education. Creation of career ladders, collaboration between universities and schools, establishing a rigorous credentialing process, and an emphasis of expanding the knowledge base of teacher education through research in field settings, are a few of the common goals of both reports.

Examination of the original reports and subsequent articles expanding upon the reports, bring to light similarities between a teacher education reform program implemented over 20 years ago and recent calls for reform. National Teacher Corps, enacted primarily to improve the quality of education for low income children, was developed within individual schools and school districts in collaboration with colleges of education and the support of the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The following discussion will focus primarily upon the underlying similarities between what Teacher Corps Programs developed and what the Holmes Group report and the Carnegie report are now suggesting for teacher education reform.

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General Comparisons

The Holmes and Carnegie reports suggest similar changes for teacher education and the profession. They recommend restructuring teacher education programs by: eliminating undergraduate education degrees and emphasizing a liberal arts undergraduate program prior to a professional education degree(professional education training would consist of educational pedagogy and reflective clincial experience); initiating differentiated staffing patterns that have provisions for professional development beginning with the novice teacher and culminating with the master teacher("Career teacher" in the Holmes report, "Lead teacher" in the Carnegie report); creating professional examinations/evaluations of teaching standards for entry level and advancement; collaboration with schools for clinical training and research development("professional schools" in the Holmes report, "Clinical schools" in the Carnegie report); and increasing salaries for teachers, resulting in comparable pay scales with other professions requiring similar advanced training.

Teacher Corps Programs included many of these same initiatives. The majority of Teacher Corps Programs were graduate programs. Teacher Corps Interns were recruited with undergraduate degrees in fields other than education and trained in educational pedagogy with an emphasis on immediate application in public school classrooms. Differentiated staffing was a consideration in Teacher Corps Programs. "Team Leaders", public

school teachers who were assigned to groups of Teacher Corps Interns, were "master" teachers responsible for leadership in curriculum development, teaching, and clinical supervision("Lead Teacher", "Career Teacher" similarity).

Although many of the Teacher Corps programs emphasized "competency based training" with the desire to train professionally competent teachers, national exams/evaluations were not an integral component of programs. The collaborative emphasis of university and public schools found in both reports were the foundation of Teacher Corps programs. Teaching Centers, consisting of consortiums involving participating schools and universities, are similar to the clinical schools and professional schools advocated by Carnegie and the Holmes report. They linked the schools with the university enabling cooperative efforts of professional development to occur at both preservice and inservice levels. The teaching center concept allowed university professors to pursue teacher education research and allowed public school teachers to further their own professional knowledge through ongoing inservice education provided by other teachers and university faculty.

Finally, raising teacher salaries and professionalizing the field of teaching was also an integral component of Teacher Corps programs. The graduate training interns received was in effect fostering the further development of teaching as a profession-closely aligned with required advanced training in other professions.

Of particular interest to university schools of education is the priority of research and clinical training/experimention in

developing model teacher education programs that the Holmes and Carnegie reports recommend. Research and clinical training/experimention, in conjunction with schools, requires a commitment to collaboration between schools and universities. Teacher Corps programs also incorporated research and clinical training/experimention and collaboration as a means in promoting necessary improvement in the quality of teacher education programs. The following is a further examination of these points.

Research & Clinical Training/Experimentation Component

The emphasis of teacher education research, particularly in the Holmes Report, is another focus that paralleled the ongoing challenge to improve teacher education by Teacher Corps programs. Teacher education research has generated a substantial amount of knowledge practical for classroom decision making(Berliner, 1985; Ornstein, 1985). Continued research, and in particular, research in classrooms, has the potential to improve the knowledge base and to suggest how teaching can become more effective. In 1975, Teacher Corps' administrators recognized the need for effective research by including the emphasis of research as one of five major training approaches(Smith, 1975). Many current themes of the Holmes and Carnegie Reports are presented in Bill Smith's(National Teacher Corps Director) writings from 1975. The following could clearly have been written and included in the current teacher reform reports:

But even more important is the role of Teacher Corps

in developing and implementing new ideas for constructive change. Teacher Corps makes that possible. It draws the school and the university together in planning programs for training and implementation, and it provides extra teachers to make the staffing of innovative teacher techniques possible. (p. 98).

Clearly, teacher experimentation combined with research provides empirical evidence that is more beneficial for the practice of teaching than teaching ideologies often developed and fostered by "intuitive" or "common sense approaches".

Collaboration Emphasis

Inherent in the Holmes and Carnegie Reports, is a well focused call for collaborative efforts in the training and retraining of teachers. Collaboration with varying constituencies is promoted as a necessary means to further the effectiveness of teacher education. Universities, local schools, state departments of education, and state legislatures have been identified as necessary components to ensure the development of meaningful teacher education. Teacher Corps combined the above mentioned components with a national focus (federal government), a state focus(state networks involving individual Teacher Corps programs), and a local focus involving community participation. Federal support, state networking of Teacher Corps projects, and community involvement (e.g., governance board participation) were necessary links to encourage collaboration in developing and sustaining Teacher Corps programs.

The importance of collaboration is most notably found among public schools and teacher education universities when considering the professional development of teachers. According to the Holmes report, this colloboration manifests itself in the form of the professional development school where university faculty and school faculty address the following areas: a) providing mutual support and facilitation of student learning problems, b) cooperative teaching in the schools and the university, c) research on teacher practice, and d) collaborative supervision of clinical experiences. Teacher Corps long standing recognition of these areas was realized particularly in later program cycles. Through the interaction of schools and universities, Teacher Corps Interns were able to train with teaching experts who provided different and varied skills by combining field and practical application of educational theory. The connection allowed interns to practice and experiment with various teaching styles and methods learned through university study and evaluated in field situations with the assistance of cooperating teachers. Hence, Teacher Corps Interns were trained to meet the diverse needs and learning styles of children with varying backgrounds, skills, and abilities.

Commitment To Change

Many educational reform movements have their roots in earlier programs or policies. Both the Holmes and Carnegie reports are not suggesting new ideas when addressing the issues of teacher education. However, as Imig(1986) indicates with

regard to the Holmes report, the "newness" of the ideas are not essential to the report's thrusts, but the apparent "commitment to change" for teacher education reform is. Teacher Corps' commitment to changing teacher education became paramount in its program philosophy by establishing varied teacher education programs. Perhaps, like many other societal reform movements, teacher education reform interest is cyclical in its ability to capture society's collective interest. Both the Holmes Group and the Carnegie Commission, independently formed and administered, appear to once again raise the issue of the quality of teacher education programs. By rediscovering Teacher Corps and re-examining its effectiveness, a valuable resource is provided for the current teacher education reform movement. Andre Gide once said that "All this has been said before--but since nobody listened it must be said again." It might be that people did listen but that many good ideas take time, perserverence and the right context to demonstrate their worth. Given the complexity of teaching and professional development, it is not surprising to find that learning from experience is not an easy matter and that some of the greatest resources for development lie within past experience.

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